

Washington, D.C.

"The bills passed in House on Monday will do a lot for our nation's veterans and specifically address some of the unique needs of our veterans in southern New Mexico," said Congressman Harry Teague, a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. "For many of the veterans in the 2nd Congressional District accessing the healthcare they have earned and deserve takes hours and often times days away from home when these bills become law our caregivers will finally see some much needed relief."

In addition to Congressman Harry Teague's legislation the bills approved by the House include a comprehensive bill to expand necessary life insurance options for veterans and their families, as well as improve medical services at VA hospitals and clinics around the country, a bill to streamline the process for nonprofit research and education corporations to participate in VA research endeavors, and a bill to provide essential support and training to those caring for this Nation's wounded veterans.

H.R. 3155, as amended - Caregiver Assistance and Resource Enhancement Act (Michaud)

The July 2007 report of the President's Commission on Care for America's Returning Wounded Warriors (Dole-Shalala Commission) found that of the 1,730 injured OEF/OIF veterans surveyed, about 21 percent of active duty, 15 percent of the reserve, and 24 percent of retired or separated service members had friends or family who gave up a job to be a caregiver. H.R. 3155 would provide support services to family and non-family caregivers of veterans, including educational sessions on how to be a better caregiver; one-stop access to support services via a dedicated caregiver support Internet website; and information and outreach. The bill would also make counseling and mental health services available to family and non-family caregivers of veterans.

H.R. 3219 - To make certain improvements in the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs relating to insurance and health care. (Filner)

This comprehensive bill would expand options for veterans and service members to obtain life insurance policies that better fit their needs, and the needs of their families. The bill also improves health services for veterans by increasing participation of physician assistants at the Veterans Health Administration, prohibiting the collection of copayments for certain veterans who are catastrophically disabled, establishing a 'Committee on Care of Veterans with Traumatic Brain Injury', waiving housing loan fees for some disabled veterans, expanding nursing home care for certain veterans, and allowing Medal of Honor recipients to receive a priority status for medical services.

H.R. 2770, as amended - Veterans Nonprofit Research and Education Corporations Enhancement Act of 2009 (Filner)

This bill would modify and update provisions of law relating to nonprofit research and education corporations so they can better support VA research. Specifically, this bill expands the general authorities on establishing nonprofit research corporations by authorizing the creation of multi-medical center research corporations where two or more VA medical centers share one corporation and improves accountability of the corporations by detailing the audit requirements.

The bills will next be considered by the U.S. Senate.

To read more about Congressman Harry Teague's work on behalf of New Mexico's Veterans go to Teague.house.gov

- On Monday, July 27th the House of Representatives approved three bills that would improve benefits and services to veterans provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Two of the bills included legislation that Congressman Harry Teague introduced earlier in the year to support New Mexico's veterans. HR 2738 to support Veteran Family Caregivers with travel and lodging expenses was included in HR 3155. HR 2180 which increases disabled vets ability to purchase a home by waving fees for disabled vets participating in the VA home loan program who are recalled to active duty was included in HR 3219.